

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR

ESTABLISHED IN 1840

"I need encouragement as much as any single member of this Church. I thank God that in the past He has come to my rescue when I have most needed His aid. I pray that as the future comes He will never desert me."—ANTOINE R. IVINS.

No. 25, Vol. 95

Thursday, June 29, 1933

Price One Penny

SPIRITUALISM—THE ABUSE OF THE VEIL

ELDER N. L. NELSON

THE veil was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened. We saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit.—(*Vision manifested to Joseph the Seer and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple.*)

Perhaps every mortal being who has given the question any attention recognizes what the Veil is, viz., that mysterious curtain which confines our perceptions to the natural world, limits our eyes, our ears, and all our other senses to the sphere of the here and now.

But not everybody has asked himself, "Where is the Veil?" Is it something outside of us or something within us? Does the Veil, for instance, hang in the air between me and my sainted mother who has just come into the room? I do not see her, but she may easily be there, blessing and encouraging me, for all that. In the temple, while taking their endowments, men and women often see those for whom work is being done, and sometimes hear what they interpret to be a heavenly choir. Is there a veil of sight and sound surrounding others in the same company—others who do not see and hear these things?

Happily the question is answered by no less an authority than the Prophet Joseph Smith, in the quotation at the head of this article. The Veil, or barrier between the spiritual and the natural world, lies deep within the soul itself; just as do the rosy morn, and vivid flash of lightning, and the startling crash of thunder.

The power to look behind the Veil is innate in every child of God sent to this lower world to finish his divine education; but it is an occulted or static faculty, and one evidently intended by our Father in Heaven to remain dormant during earth life; save as He Himself quickens it, in prophet or seer, to put over the mortal horizon some message for the good of mankind. At the same time, He does not leave us without guide in the darkness of

mortality ; some light, some echo, some infinite refrain of the life that was, and the life that is to be, gets across or through the Veil to each of us.

Respecting the life that was, situations constantly arise which are apparently new, yet strangely familiar ; faces, voices, ideas, seem to stir up, as it were, memories of that previous life. As Zion's poet has said :

Yet oft-times a secret something
Whispered, "You're a stranger here,"
And I felt that I had wandered
From a more exalted sphere.

The same sort of submerged reminiscence led the poet Wordsworth to exclaim :

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting ;
The soul that rises with us—our life's star—
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar.
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.

Outside the glimpse we obtain in scripture, the Veil in the East (pre-existence) has had few interpreters, though many have done violence to it.

MANY INTERPRETERS OF AFTER-LIFE EXISTENCE

But as to the Veil in the West (after-life existence) into which the life sun of every man and woman is scheduled to set, the world is full of interpreters. Books by the thousands essay to reveal the mysteries that lie beyond. Shakespeare's "boume from whence no traveller returns," has long been discredited as ancient heresy ; the dead now step out of seance cabinets and mingle with the crowd.

Thus it comes about that from the crude spirit-rappings on western parlor tables, up through the night circles of psychic science delvers, to the profound searchings of Yogi and Mahatma in oriental schools of mysticism, the Veil is no longer the modest yet marvellous curtain which a loving Father intended should at once conceal from vulgar curiosity, and reveal to loving faith and trust ; but is instead a tattered and violated screen, through which are disclosed—alas, what sounds of bedlam in the spirit world ! what sights to terrify and disgust ! what babblings of imbecility to make the listener long for eternal oblivion ! "I have been present at a few seances," said Dr. G. Stanley Hall, "and if what I heard there be fair samples of the human intelligence that survives the grave, then I pray for annihilation."

The purpose of this paper is to justify further the divine uses of the Veil by showing in contrast some of the evils resulting from abuses. These latter are to be found variously named ; as in demoniac possession, in the controlled exercise of the divine gift of tongues, in spurious revelations, in the seeing of ghosts and apparitions, in the hearing of spirit-voices (clairaudience), in looking through the Veil into the spirit-world (clairvoyance), in the evil tendency of ouija-board communications, in table-rap-

ping circles, in spirit-seances, in spirit-writing, and in other similar devices; wherein, not improbably, this world and the next may overlap to the detriment, and often to the positive danger, of credulous and unwary sojourners in the here and now.

It has been suggested with a great deal of truth, that the pendulum of human interest, which for three generations has swung in the direction of purely natural phenomena, is now on the turn. It does not follow, however, that it will swing toward the spirituality of true religion; the signs rather indicate that it will attempt to explore the hidden world to its last mystic labyrinth through the violations of the Veil as above indicated.

Appreciating this probability, Elder O. F. Whitney has set forth in an admirable series of articles, what the Lord has revealed for our guidance respecting the after-life world. The purpose of this article is to impress the same general lesson from another point of view: "To be forewarned is to be forearmed."

And since the dangers attending these bypaths to the Beyond can be appreciated only by knowing some further details about them, I shall be pardoned if I draw upon facts accumulated by the Society for Psychic Research, as well as from the findings of other serious investigators, in further elucidation of the teachings of revelation.

DEATH SAID TO MEAN GREATER LIFE

First, as to the fact of death. It is not death at all, in the sense of cessation for a time of our mental faculties; on the contrary, it is perhaps a swift rebound into life—into a wider, deeper, truer life than was possible on the earth, especially in a worn-out, decrepit body.

Full-grown, alert, clear-minded, emotional, free from bodily suffering, the released spirit may not improbably move about for a time in the very room where its late body lies, and mingle with the sorrowing occupants, quite as if it were one among them. For the fact of death dawns but slowly on one who has passed on, and comes, when it does come, partly, no doubt, from looking at its late but now useless tenement—perhaps even from being a listener at the funeral, and a spectator at the grave—but mainly because it has itself become impalpable to its late earth companions. Strive as it may to put over words of cheer and comfort, or tender embraces, it perceives that no impression whatever is made on its loved ones. *It is beyond the Veil.*

Terror might now easily overtake it—the terror of loneliness in an infinite universe—save from the fact that the other side of the Veil is more populous than this, and that consequently the newcomer is met by relatives and friends—perhaps by its guardian angel—who gives to it its new orientation.

Secondly, as to the continuance of the laws of growth and development. Evidently the spirit does not lose any power essential to progress, by reason of death. It is still free to obey or disobey, to live in harmony with, or in violation of, the commandments of God. If, therefore, a spirit on this side may waste time peeping through the Veil, a spirit on the other side may equally waste time looking in this direction. Moreover, that communication has actually been established by means of spirit-mediums need not, it seems to me, admit of serious doubt. That such com-

munication often takes place irrespective of mediums seems equally tenable. Indeed, if devils, the lowest or least advanced forms of intelligence, exercise this kind of agency among men, as witnessed by numerous instances in scripture, why should we take the attitude that God denies a similar agency to disembodied spirits?

In this connection, it may be pointed out that spirits do not continue the form, bearing, and dress of earth-life, but merge into the ranks and fashions of their new habitat. Infants do not continue in infant form, but stretch out again, as it were, to their pre-existent fulness of stature, albeit of a fainter texture and tenuity than those who are more mature when they pass; the old and infirm, who on this side totter, as it were, to the grave, rebound there into the youth and beauty of vigorous manhood and womanhood.

How, then, when it comes our time to pass on, and the departed shall meet us on the other side—how shall we recognize them as the loved ones we laid away?

APPEARANCE MAY BE CHANGED IN THE AFTER-WORLD

On the earth-plane, our rigid garment of clay makes it fairly difficult for us to change our appearance very greatly; but in the after-world a spirit may, so it would seem, assume at will any stage of its previous earth life, with the very appearance of clothes worn at the time, including the peculiarities of personal bearing and mental traits. How this power to create by act of will any shape that fills the imagination makes for deception in sense communication and materialization will be discussed later in this paper.

Thirdly, as to the persistence of law and order. That the here-after world is an organized world, and much more perfect indeed than this one, seems to me a just inference from three considerations: first, the law of eternal progress, which acts upon all intelligences, would inevitably result in organization, and could in fact be promoted only by organization; secondly, the fact that the Church of the First-born—the Church triumphant—has been in operation behind the Veil for thousands of years, could result in nothing less than a perfection in social order and classification of which we can scarcely conceive; and thirdly, an organized spirit-world is surely implied in the third heaven of paradise to which Paul refers; for if there be a third heaven, corresponding to the celestial glory, then there must also be a second and a first, corresponding respectively to a terrestrial and a telestial glory, and also a Hades, which might correspond to a no-glory or not-organized state.

It would hardly admit of doubt, then, that the released spirit moves onward—classifies itself upward or downward by virtue of its own inner affinity. Paradise is evidently that state and place to any forward-looking soul, where it finds correspondence; the point at which it can effectually catch on—its frontier of eternal progress, as it were. Hades is probably the scriptural name for a similar, but negative correspondence to the drifting soul; the point at which the good, the beautiful, and the true do not pursue it to its discomfort and annoyance.

This general scheme of the next world, as foreshadowed by

scripture, is substantially the arrangement of the hereafter as found by psychic research. Spirits eager to learn and advance, or imbued as we should say with the spirit of eternal progress, soon leave the earth-plane and move outward to that spiritual sphere where they can be most happy; which to us can signify only the zone of new growth, new truth-perception, new achievement, whence alone comes real felicity; for "Man is," says the Lord, "that he might have joy," and no better formulation of the law of eternal progress than this could possibly be made.

THE FATE OF SPIRITS WHO WONT REPENT

But what of the derelicts, the drifters, the wrecks, moral and physical, of whom scripture says, "He which is filthy let him be filthy still." These are earthbound spirits—stranded souls by the millions—who, until repentance shall turn them again toward spiritual growth, wander over the earth-plane and linger about the places that claimed their earthly love; the miser near his hoard, the worshipper of mammon in the whirlpools of trade-gambling, the immoral man in houses of ill-fame, the drunkard in the saloon, and so on: all trying to feel by ghostly propinquity a little of the illicit thrill of sensuality that earth-life once afforded them. Clairvoyants, i. e., spirit-mediums who can see on the spiritual plane, declare that haunts of vice and crime are literally packed by these spirit-hulks, and that the impure atmosphere of such places is due even more to their low, unsatisfied desires, than it is to the influence of the mortal *habitudes*.

If, then, we would know in a word the true essence of spiritualism, as it is now on tap in ten thousand seance-circles throughout the world, we have it here suggested in the nature of the spirit-correspondents on the other side: souls that gave themselves over to mere sensation while on earth, and having formed no "hunger and thirst after righteousness" or things of eternal progress, are consequently obtuse to the spiritual promptings which call their fellow-spirits to higher spheres of achievement. Such souls are in hell—for what better characterization is there of hell than wanting to and can't? Out of hell they are reaching earthward, eager to feel again the low sensations to which they gave their lives. Spirit seances furnish the opportunity. They are consequently ever on hand to squeeze into the bodies, and control the mental powers of mediums.

Such is the explanation, by psychic research scientists, of the low moral tone and intellectual drive characterizing the utterances of ninety-nine out of every hundred half-way clearing-houses between this world and the next. This explains no less clearly the gradual coarsening and moral degeneracy characteristic of most spirit mediums themselves.

For next to low sensual desires, mendacity is the quality most often detected in these spirit communications. No matter what departed person may be called for—child or grandsire, relative, friend, or foe—some spirit within hailing distance is ready to assume the part; often in such detail of dress, voice, bearing, and circumstantial happenings, as to deceive completely the sitter. It would not be an extraordinary stunt at all for a thousand mediums scattered throughout the world to call up and interview the shade, say, of Napoleon at one and the same instant of time!

Nor is the intrusion of such influences into our lives the only penalty of tampering with the veil; evil spirits of the brood of Lucifer are also next to earth-plane, not only distilling their malevolent ideals into every negative heart, but actually seeking to experience what their primal sin deprived them of forever, viz., a habitation in the second, or mortal estate.

THE TERRORS OF A VIOLATED VEIL

Demoniac possession may be glossed over in psychology and medicine under a harmless name; but the awful reality of it is too well attested, not only in scripture but in latter-day experience, to doubt its possibility as another of the terrors of a violated Veil. Sporadic instances of what one may well suspect to be cases of such possession are no doubt known to most serious-minded readers of this magazine; but the history of mankind, since the days when Jesus cast out devils, is not wanting in accounts of widespread attacks of similar, if not the same, dire evils; and numerous modern instances are to be found in connection with the frenzy often characterizing religious camp-meetings.

McMaster, an American historian, writes of the 1799-1800 religious revival in Kentucky:

At no time was the "falling exercise" so prevalent as at night. Nothing was then wanting that could strike terror into minds weak, timid, and harassed. The red glare of campfire reflected from hundreds of tents and wagons, the dense blackness of the flickering shadows, the darkness of the surrounding forest, made still more terrible by the screams and groans of the spiritually wounded, who had fled to it for comfort; the entreaty of the preachers; the sobs and shrieks of the downcast . . . were too much for those over whose minds and bodies lively imagination held sway. The heart swelled, the nerves gave way, the hands and feet grew cold, and motionless and speechless they fell headlong to the ground.

Some lay quiet, unable to move or speak; some talked but could not move. Some beat the floor with their heels. Some, shrieking in agony, bounded about, it is said, like a fish out of water. Many rushed wildly over the stumps and benches and plunged, shouting, "Lost! lost!" into the forest.

As the meetings grew more and more frequent, this nervous excitement assumed new and more terrible forms. One was known as "jerks"; another as the "barking exercise"; a third as the "Holy Laugh." The "jerks" began in the head and spread rapidly to the feet. The head would be thrown from side to side so swiftly that the features would be blotted out, and the hair made to snap. When the body was affected the sufferer was hurled over hindrances that came in his way, and finally dashed on the ground, to bounce about like a ball. At camp meetings in the far South, saplings were cut off breast-high and left "for the people to jerk by." One who visited such a camp-ground declares that about the roots of from fifty to one hundred saplings, the earth was kicked up "as by a horse stamping flies." . . .

From the nerves and muscles, the disorder passed to the mind. Men dreamed dreams, and saw visions; many fancied themselves dogs, went on all fours, and barked until they grew hoarse. It was no uncommon sight to behold numbers of them gathered about a tree barking, "treering the devil."

Coming next to some of the specific ways in which human curiosity seeks to tamper with the Veil, we may consider briefly

the occasional itching among Latter-day Saints for new revelation. Not a year passes that some would-be prophet does not turn up among us with a divine commission, superseding, or profoundly modifying, something or other in the Church. Most of them base their claims on the "coming of one mighty and strong," as predicted in the Doctrine and Covenants; which great prophet they declare themselves to be.

IMPERSONATIONS OF THE FATHER AND SON

Three of these unfortunates have been known personally to the writer: men of more than average intelligence, and of clean moral habits. One had visions in which impersonations of the Father and Son appeared to him repeatedly, and called upon him to denounce the president of the Church as a fallen prophet.

Another, as he was plowing, heard the voice of an "angel" who was walking by his side; a voice that followed him for years, led him into many a *cul-de-sac*, landed him in the insane asylum for a brief season, and gave him eventually enough revelations to fill a volume.

A third was betrayed through his excessive spirituality which caused him to withdraw from things earthly in the direction of spiritual self-sacrifice. Incredible as it may seem—and showing how men fall by insensible degrees—his advisers behind the Veil finally led him and his followers, after some years of admirable self-abnegation, into the supreme test-sacrifice of exchanging wives and still remaining continent—unless the Lord revealed otherwise to each pair individually!

Here we have pitiable results of a violated Veil; of good men betrayed by false spirits which assumed to be heavenly guides. Indeed, whoever seeks spiritual guidance by open vision or articulated message, instead of trusting the light which proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space, and which ever shines translucent from the other side to those who have faith and patience, may indeed succeed in brushing the Veil aside—since the Veil is a something within each person's consciousness—but how can he know who his spirit correspondent may be? Attempting thus to live by sight rather than by faith, involves a danger from which one should rather pray to be divinely protected.

For the mile-posts in our spiritual journey we have truth—that is to say, the articulated messages of scripture—to guide us; for the uncharted spaces between truthness is, it seems to me, a better guide than truth; for out of the feeling of "rightness" which fills our consciousness, must then issue, by definite act of will, our self-chosen conduct; whereas, if some other being told us at each step what to do, our blind response would add but little to our growth and development. Man's part in this scheme of salvation is to become like a little child, in other words, to trust; always we walk best when we walk by faith rather than by sight. Brushing the Veil aside is an attempt to reverse this divine law.

Of all the means for delving into the occult, the most harmless seems, at first glance, to be the ouija-board, a mechanical device on wheels, and fitted with a pencil to record messages. And messages

(Continued on page 428)

THURSDAY, JUNE 29, 1933

EDITORIAL

RESULT OF SONG COMPETITION

EARLY in the year, announcement was made in the *Star* that a copy of *The Life of Brigham Young*, by Susan Young Gates, would be presented by her daughter, Leah D. Widtsoe, for the best song composed by a member of the Church in the British Mission, to be sung to the tune of one of our popular Church hymns. There were no particular conditions imposed, excepting that the composition was to be expressive of a saint's love for "Motherland," and the cause of Zion in the earth.

A large number of compositions were submitted for the contest, and it was a matter of great surprise that there is to be found so much poetic talent in this part of the Lord's vineyard. We regret that the *Star* is not of sufficient proportions to publish most of them, for they are indeed worthy of it. However, we have decided to encroach on our space and publish five of the best contributions.

The adjudicating committee has selected as the prize winner, the song written by Joseph Orton Bettridge, of the Hucknall Branch of the Nottingham District. The sentiment is uplifting and inspiring, the words are well chosen, the rhythm is easy and well balanced, and the tune to which the words are set is popular all over the Church, made so by the late President Charles W. Penrose with his soul-stirring hymn, "O Zion, Dear Zion."

We congratulate Brother Bettridge on his success, and suggest that the district presidents throughout the mission encourage the use of his composition in all of the branches.

O BRITAIN! DEAR BRITAIN!

(Tune—"O Ye Mountains High")

O my island home, where the billows roam,
Clean and fresh with the breeze from the sea;
With her fields green and gold, beauty favours the bold,
In the land of the brave and the free!

O Britain! dear Britain! home of the brave!
Thy fair sons will defend, truth and justice extend
Over earth, while our colours shall wave.

In thy sunlit hills, where the skylark trills
Notes of love to his mate in the dell,
Where the streams, crystal clear, ripple sweet in the ear,
Of a land where true patriots dwell.

O Britain! dear Britain! land of the brave!

We will rise in our might to do battle for right,
And the downcast and fallen to save.

Here the true Church of God, found a fertile sod

On the shores of our bright little isle;
May her sons ever shine in a light so divine,
And our nation shall prosper the while.

O Britain! dear Britain! home of the brave!

May the Gospel of peace 'mong thy people increase,
For the Gospel is mighty to save.

Then ye saints now arise, for your power ever lies

In the influence for good that ye wield;
May our country be blessed and be freed of distress,
And the Gospel a rich harvest yield.

O Britain! dear Britain! land of the brave!

Of thy praises we'll sing, to thy just laws we'll chng,
And assist thee thy glory to save!

JOSEPH ORTON BETTRIDGE, Hucknall, Notts.

The four following competitive compositions are worthy of recognition; in fact, each of the authors is entitled to a prize. But as there were none to be awarded, the next best thing to do is to publish them, which we consider better than any gift.

O MOTHERLAND SO DEAR!

(Tune—"Our Mountain Home So Dear")

O Motherland so dear, saints living far and near,

Send forth thy praise, send forth thy praise;
Thy green clad fields and laues,
So blest by nature's pains
In sylvan glory reigns
Are fair to see.

England, thy name is known, where every flag is flown

O'er land and sea, o'er land and sea;
Thou hast loved truth and right,
And conquered tyrant's might,
With an enduring fight,
Unceasingly.

The sons of truth have come, and here have found a home

Upon thy shores, upon thy shores.
They have been tried and true,
When ignorance came to view,
Yet found a welcome, too,
Within thy doors.

We long to greet the day, when truth shall have full sway,

In all the land, in all the land.
Then England shall be blest,
Her troubled soul find rest,
And peace fill every breast—
Eternally.

VIOLET M. COLEBY, Lowestoft, Suffolk.

O'ER ENGLAND'S LEAFY DELLS

(Tune—"High on the Mountain Top")

O'er England's leafy dells,
 O'er England's grassy plains,
 Hark, truth and wisdom swells
 In clear triumphant strains.
 The voice of God again is heard ;
 Come saints and hearken unto His word.

For lo ! within your land
 The truth is now restored,
 As Jesus did command,
 According to His word.
 And England's shores shall ring with praise,
 For truth restored in latter days.

NORA HOLLINRAKE, Burnley, Lancashire.

ENGLAND !

(Tune—"Down by the River's Verdant Side")

Land of my heart ! O, gift divine !
 Sent of my God, I came to thee,
 Freely thou gavest what was thine,
 Gave it in kindness unto me ;
 Take thou, I pray, my all to thee,
 All that is mine or mine to be.

Ah ! man hath chosen, we are twain :
 He is the Lord, He doeth right.
 Serve we before Him, might and main,
 Stand we together in His light.
 Share we our peace and happiness,
 Share we in sorrow and distress.

Dust of thy dust, my fathers lie,
 Flesh of their flesh the children be ;
 England we live, England we die,
 Sinewed and born of liberty.
 Born where the sons of Israel rest,
 Clapsed in thine arms, upon thy breast.

Sing to my soul, thou joyous land,
 Sing with thy springtime voices clear,
 And moaning tide over the sand,
 And shrieking gale I fain would hear ;
 Thine every voice rings out the call
 Of power divine ! I love them all !

Land of my heart, when strife is past,
 Shall the great islands of the sea
 Blend in the grand celestial vast,
 Banish the name and place of thee ?
 I will look down from Zion's hill
 And smile on thee, my England still.

JAMES R. BARGH, Sheffield, Yorkshire.

OUR ISLAND HOME

(Tune—"God Save the King")

OUR sea-girt island home,
 Where trees and flowers bloom
 On every hand ;
 Where wind and wave caress
 Each headland, shore and ness.
 Whisp'ring of happiness ;
 Our Motherland.

Green hedge and leafy lane,
 Skirting the fields of grain,
 And shady dell ;
 Brooklet and sparkling rill,
 Song-birds with happy trill,
 The air with music fill.
 And goodness tell.

The oak, with stately pride,
 Majestic, grows beside
 The tender rose ;
 Emblem of strength and might,
 Tempered by grace and light,
 Green leaf and petal bright,
 Forever grows.

Hardened by winds that roar ;
 Cold from a northern shore ;
 Home of brave men.
 Writing on history's page,
 A noble heritage
 Of toiler, peer, and sage,
 From plough and pen.

Guardian of nations small,
 Giving her life, her all
 In freedom's cause ;
 God send her truth and peace,
 Righteousness without cease,
 Brotherly love increase,
 To banish wars.

Outpost of Zion's shore,
 May she for evermore,
 Loyalty show
 To virtue, truth, and right,
 Banishing error's night,
 And blessed Gospel light,
 On all bestow.

JOHN F. COOK. Lowestoft, Suffolk.

GREAT BRITAIN has expanded from a comparatively small kingdom into a great empire, because she is a nation of destiny, an instrument in the hands of the Lord in preparing the way for the fulfilment of the words uttered by the mouths of His holy prophets.

"FOUNDER'S DAY IN EUROPE"

UNDER this caption, the *Relief Society Magazine* for June published an editorial in commendation of the splendid work of Sister Leah D. Widtsoe in having accomplished the organization of auxiliary boards for the different missions composing the European Mission. The outstanding feature in this splendid piece of work is the fact that in all the missions, with but two or three exceptions, the local saints preside and conduct the work of each auxiliary. The result of their labours is reflected in the excellent work being accomplished all over the Mission.

The *Star* contemplates publishing the pictures of the different Mission presidencies, and a brief history of the organization of each auxiliary.

Following is the editorial from the *Relief Society Magazine*, referred to in this article :

We deeply appreciate the kind thoughtfulness of Sister Leah D. Widtsoe in sending us copies of the Anniversary Numbers of the *Star* for each mission in Europe, which the Relief Societies printed in honour of Founder's Day. These were in English, German, French, Dutch, Scandinavian and Norwegian.

Never before in our history have the European Relief Societies taken completely the lessons as provided for our organizations in the United States. This marks a great stride forward in the unity of our work.

Sister Widtsoe writes that for five years she has urged most strongly that the missions organize auxiliary presidencies instead of having all the organizations work under the direction of the Mission President's wife. She has realized and has tried to convince the Mission Presidents that the work cannot grow constantly until the local people are trained to manage their own affairs as they do in the Stakes of Zion. She now sees the results of her efforts, for practically all of the Missions have complete Relief Society executive officers.

Sister Widtsoe has worked untiringly to strengthen the auxiliary organizations throughout the European Mission and to have them carry on the work as provided by the General Boards. We congratulate her on her success, and are sure that the women who are now holding office and carrying responsibility will develop greatly and that the work will make rapid strides forward.

SPIRITUALISM—THE ABUSE OF THE VEIL

(Concluded from page 423)

it certainly delivers: from the subconscious mind of the person whose hand rests upon it, say the psychologists; from beings in the spirit world, say other interpreters of the facts. Whatever be the merits of the controversy, this so-called psychological toy has, within the last few years since the craze for it has been on, materially helped to fill insane asylums, more than one-third of whose occupants are there by reason of a violated Veil in one form or other. Here is one case vouched for by a noted authority on psychic affairs:

An aged couple, devout Methodists, lost their only child. Month after month they remained inconsolable, until one day an acquaintance suggested that their son was eager to communicate with them through the ouija-board. At first their instincts and religious attitude warned them against it, but their sense of bereavement finally prevailed.

It did not take long to convince them that James was really directing the pencil from the other side; so they purchased an ouija-board and would sit for hours communing with their dead departed boy. Presently it dawned upon them that no sooner did they ask a question than they knew what his answer would be without waiting for the pencil. The Veil was growing thinner. Next they heard their son's voice almost as in life. Now came the tragedy. Their son's spirit—for we need not doubt that it was he—could not always remain with them; and when he left, the gap in the Veil remained. Night and day they heard voices—the coarse, bestial, ribald voices and laughter of the human derelicts that are stranded on the earth-plane. Their souls were literally trampled upon like a public street, so that sleep and even rest fled from their home. Finally they called in a nerve specialist, to whom they told their story. The next move in their pitiable downfall was their landing in an insane asylum, which proved, however, no asylum to them. Nothing but death would enable them to escape the hell they had brought into their lives.

Latter-day Saints are, perhaps, least of all given to attendance at spirit seances; it is well, nevertheless, that the true inwardness of this aspect of the violated Veil be understood. Consider, then, what really befalls a man when, whether from this side of the Veil or the other, he is hypnotized. A great thinker and writer of an oriental psychic school has well called this act the great psychological crime; and crime it must be, since it violates what the Author of man's being has made free—his divine agency.

Think of a man's individuality or will being violently subdued; that part in him which measures his likeness to God, his ego or "I am," which the law of eternal progress has slowly been building up toward the ultimate freedom of God Himself. Think of this divine power in him being so overcome that all his faculties, mental or physical, are subject to another's will!

As above suggested, when the violation takes place on this side, it is called hypnosis; when from the other side, it is known as mediumship. In hypnosis the control exists on the mortal-plane; in mediumship, on the spirit-plane. In both cases the blight on man's personality is the same: his spirit becomes merely a public road or gateway for the trampling of alien feet.

Because spirit-mediumship is thus seen to be a prostitution of man's ego, or the central possibility of Godhood in him, our Father in heaven never chooses this channel to get a message over to mankind. Suspicion may therefore well attach to the method, even if we suppose the beings behind the Veil are honest, and of a high order of intelligence, which from facts already set forth is very rarely the case. Besides, the difficulties of so manipulating a medium's powers as to get a message across without flaws, are enormous—every spiritualistic authority emphasizes that fact. Finally, suppose spirits of a high order, like T. De Witt Talmage and Henry Ward Beecher should succeed in

transmitting their present ideas concerning the great objects of faith, such as God, salvation, eternal progression, and so on; why should we defer to them as being infallible? Are they not still among those who are ever learning, but never quite coming to a knowledge of the truth? One ray of knowledge from our Father in heaven would be more faith-illuminating than all the scintillations of earth—and spirit—realms put together.

Latter-day Saints have therefore everything to lose and nothing to gain by giving attention to spirit-scances or promoting their teachings in any way. Nay, let us rather dedicate our homes, and pray for special protection against all influences that come to man through a violated Veil.

The earth-plane is peculiarly the sphere for acquiring earth-experiences. The lowliest duties in the here and now yield none the less of divine fruitage because of their lowliness; but in order that our experiences shall develop us heavenward, in order that earth-life shall not be out of unity with life which went before and which comes after, we need divine illumination; not of the flaring kind which appeals chiefly to sight and disturbs all our perspectives, but rather of the quiet, transcendent kind which in order to see, calls for faith and hope, and which when seen, yields peace, joy, and love. Our Father's way is evidently, therefore, the best way. Let us follow it!—(*Improvement Era*, April, 1929.)

FAREWELL SOCIAL

A ROUSING farewell social was given Saturday evening, June 24th, in Liverpool, at the historic "Durham House," by the saints of the Liverpool District, to Patriarch and Sister James H. Wallis, who have been released from their missions, and leave for their home July 20th, on the s.s. *Washington*. Patriarch Wallis had gone to Liverpool to give thirty-two blessings, which he had been unable to give at the semi-annual conference of the Liverpool District, recently held at Wigan. Taking advantage of his presence, and the further fact that it was the regular monthly Union meeting night, it was decided by President Kent S. Bramwell and his Branch Presidents to have a short Union meeting and devote the latter part of the evening to the farewell social. A fine programme of musical numbers and recitations was rendered, and then came the presentation to Brother and Sister Wallis of a fine travelling ring, by the travelling Elders and the saints of the district. President Bramwell made the presentation speech, to which Patriarch and Sister Wallis feelingly responded. Refreshments were served, and games and other recreation occupied the remainder of the evening.

On Sunday night the saints gathered from all over the district to hear farewell addresses from Patriarch and Sister Wallis. Every inch of space in the hall was occupied, and people were standing. Patriarch Wallis delivered an inspirational address on the gathering of the Jews. Sister Wallis gave a very affecting farewell talk, and Sister Ileen A. Waspe, president of the Mission Y. L. M. I. A. board, paid a splendid tribute to the faithful labours of Brother and Sister Wallis, and the hospitality of their London "home," as did also President Bramwell.

The occasion was one never to be forgotten, and will live in the memory of those who were present. All join in wishing "God speed" to Patriarch and Sister Wallis on their journey home to their loved ones.

EUGENE A. HOOPER, Auxiliary Supervisor.

SCOTTISH DISTRICT CONFERENCE

MEMBERS and friends of the four organized branches of the Scottish District gathered together on Sunday, June 11th, at Glasgow, to participate in the annual District Spring Conference.

After the preliminary programme of the morning session, the Relief Society and Priesthood separated for instructions from the general authorities of the Mission. Four advancements were made in the Priesthood, and many branch officers were set apart by President James H. Douglas, Patriarch James H. Wallis, and the four travelling Elders.

The programme of the afternoon session included a brief skit by members of the local Primary organization, presenting the general subject of the conference, "The Apostasy and Restoration of the Gospel." Three speeches were given by local brethren further developing the conference topic. In his statistical report of the missionary labours of the district Elders during the past six months, District President Jodie J. Smith stated that a total of 9,196 hours had been spent in missionary work. Of this total 882 hours had been occupied with tracting, during which time 30,851 tracts were distributed and 974 pamphlets, 29 copies of the Book of Mormon, and 30 copies of other Church books were placed in the hands of investigators. Elders of the district have engaged in 1,037 Gospel conversations. Also, during this time, five baptisms have been performed.

A capacity crowd attended the evening session. Sister Rintha Pratt Douglas and Sister Elizabeth T. Wallis bore convincing testimonies of the divinity of the Gospel and related inspiring experiences that they have had during their missions. President Douglas told of the events leading up to the restoration of the Gospel, and of the trials and tribulations endured by those whose knowledge of the Truth led them to accept it. Patriarch Wallis spoke of the building up of Zion, telling of the prophecies of Joseph Smith that have been fulfilled, and of the spreading of "Mormonism" to all the inhabitants of the earth.

Vocal selections, rendered by friends and members of the district throughout the day, added greatly to the complete enjoyment of the three sessions.

The conference was under the direction of President James H. Douglas of the British Mission, and the auxiliary meetings and their activities were directed by Sister Rintha Pratt Douglas, consulting supervisor of the auxiliaries and president of the British Mission Relief Societies. There were in attendance also Patriarch James H. Wallis and Sister Elizabeth T. Wallis of the European Mission Office; President Jodie J. Smith, Auxiliary Supervisor Woodrow C. Williams, and travelling Elders Eliot D. Ward, Arthur J. Morgan, and Emerson J. Lindsay of the Scottish District; President William H. Clawson of the Leeds District;

President Wheeler R. English of the Birmingham District ; President William Murdock and Elder Levi H. Hammon of the Hull District ; President Russell S. Ellsworth of the Bristol District ; President T. Taylor Cannon of the Nottingham District ; and Elder John E. Owens of the Newcastle District.

WOODROW C. WILLIAMS, Clerk of Conference.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD

Transfers: On June 2nd, Elder Richard S. Bennett was transferred from the London District to the *Millennial Star* Office, having been appointed to succeed Elder C. Dennis McCarthy as editorial secretary of the *Millennial Star* on June 24th.

Elder Frank Reeve Bennett, on June 14th, was transferred from the Nottingham to the London District.

Doings in the Districts: *Birmingham*—Members of the district held the annual Gold and Green festival on Whitsun Monday, June 5th. The festivities consisted of an afternoon programme given by the members of the various branches, and the Gold and Green ball, culminating the year's M. I. A. activities, in the evening.

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

To be sincere. To look life in the eyes
 With calm, undrooping gaze.
 Always to mean
 The high and truthful thing.
 Never to screen
 Behind the unmeant word, the sharp surprise
 Of cunning, never to tell the little lies
 Of look or thought. Always to choose between
 The true and small, the true and large, serene
 And high above Life's cheap dishonesties.

The soul that steers by this unfading star
 Needs never other compass. All the far
 Wide waste shall blaze with guiding light, tho' rocks
 And sirens meet and mock its straining gaze.
 Secure from storms and all Life's battle-shocks
 It shall not veer from any righteous ways.

MAURICE SMILEY.

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PUBLISHER: JAMES H. DOUGLAS, 43 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

PRINTER: JAMES FOGGO, 27 PARK LANE, LIVERPOOL

EDITORS: JOHN A. WIDTSON, 5 GORDON SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1, AND
 JAMES H. WALLIS, 2, DOUGHTY STREET, LONDON W.C. 1